

(Translation):

Hon. Léon Mercier Gouin: Honourable senators, I would not like to delay the passage of this bill which I support wholeheartedly. However, I would like a French-speaking voice to be heard on this matter, and I would like to bring up a point on which, in my opinion, we should agree immediately.

In the course of the excellent speeches delivered here tonight—first, by my honourable colleague (Hon. Mr. Blois) who moved the adoption of this bill, and by my colleague and friend from Banff (Hon. Mr. Cameron) in his brilliant address—reference was made to our respect for the past.

I have always claimed, if I may say so in passing, that our patriotism should have the breadth of the continent and I recognize Canada as my sole and only country. But it is obvious, honourable senators, that my country—my homeland—has not been in existence only since 1867. Our forefathers came here over three hundred years ago. We should not be misled by the word “centennial” into believing that our country is only one hundred years old. I believe, precisely, that this matter of the centenary of our federal union should prompt us to look back upon the past lest we forget to pay a richly deserved tribute to the discoverers, the founders, the explorers and the first settlers; moreover, in setting up scholarships—a suggestion made by the hon. senator from Banff with numerous references in support of his proposal—we should avoid using always the word “centennial” and the word “centenary” only.

I would like to see Canada officially recognized as a country now three and a half centuries old for us Canadians of French origin including our Acadian brothers, and at least three centuries for the settlers of British origin who made their homes here since Nova Scotia was conquered. To this I shall add only one word and that is that our country extends from one ocean to the other and that our history of course embodies all our glorious past, our past which I shall call purposely of “the New France” as well as all the days we have lived since—some happy, some sad. Let us look at the future, I have faith in it, in spite of all the threats that may hang over us and we must, of course, put all our heart in a worthy celebration to honour our homeland with its present political structure, that of a federal union.

(Text):

Motion agreed to and bill read second time.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the third time?

Moved by Honourable Mr. Blois that the bill be placed on the Orders of the Day for third reading at the next sitting.

Motion agreed to.

**NATURAL RESOURCES TRANSFER
(SCHOOL LANDS) AMENDMENT ACT, 1961**

FIRST READING

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-129, to amend certain agreements respecting the administration and control of natural resources in the Provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Bill read first time.

SECOND READING

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read the second time?

Hon. Mr. Wall: Next sitting.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: Now.

Hon. Arthur M. Pearson moved the second reading of the bill.

He said: Honourable senators, this bill has come before both houses a number of times, so I shall not have a great deal to say concerning it.

Bill C-129 is an Act to amend certain agreements respecting the administration and control of natural resources in the Provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan. It is a very simple bill as far as this honourable house is concerned. It is really the enactment of an agreement made by the three provinces mentioned above and the Government of Canada. Specifically this bill refers to school lands in these three provinces.

Before I deal with the bill itself I would like to give just a brief outline of the history of school lands in these three provinces.

In 1872 the Federal Government of that day decided to set aside two sections in every township in each of these provinces for the purpose of assisting in the educational program in those provinces. As honourable senators know, a township consists of 36 sections being six miles square, and numbered as follows: No. 1 starts in the southeast corner of a township, and each section is numbered until No. 6 is reached. The southwest corner of the township then moves up one row, extending from No. 7 to No. 12, and so on, until each section is separately numbered. For the purpose of these school lands, sections No. 11 and No. 29 were designated as school lands.